



*Session update from Olympia*

*October 31, 2011*



**Pictured above: Senate Majority Leader Brown with WSU 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Pharmacy Students**

## **It's about Lab Coats and Scrubs!**

The Riverpoint campus in Spokane is an institution that brings people together to create something greater than the sum of its parts. The campus is a place, people, and an idea all at once. That sentiment exists both in buildings and books, and in the hearts and minds of the people who study, teach, and work here. Over the past decade and a half, the state has invested over \$164,000,000 in six buildings on the campus (Phase 1 Classroom Building, Health Sciences Building, Academic Center, Nursing Building, South Campus Facility and Biomedical and Health Services Building).

Work on the Biomedical and Health Services building received its ceremonial sendoff earlier this month. On October 5, I joined the

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governor and other state, county and community leaders for the historic groundbreaking of what will be the anchor facility for a medical school in Spokane. This is really another important milestone in a vision and a dream that people have had for over 20 years in Spokane. This campus will be the home to all kinds of healthcare education, but also will help contribute to the healthcare quality that people receive in Spokane.



Last session I made funding for a medical school in Eastern Washington a top priority. The immediate and long-term economic impact of the initiative was carefully

calculated: A national shortage of 150,000 physicians and unacceptably low rates of physicians-to-population in Eastern and Central Washington, much-needed construction jobs for a \$70 million facility, a \$2 billion annual impact and 13,000 new jobs by 2030, helped to illustrate a need that was clearly defined. This building will eventually accommodate 80 first-year students and 80 second-year students, the Pharmacy School and will be the foundation for the education and training for the allied health fields. **It really is all about the lab coats and scrubs!** Working in a bipartisan fashion with my colleagues from Eastern Washington and across the state, the Legislature's final capital budget included \$35 million for construction of the medical school on Washington State University Spokane Riverpoint campus - the first half of the capital funding for the facility.

In a community renowned for its collaborative spirit, this project stands apart for both its boldness, and its impact. Under the visionary leadership of WSU, UW, Greater Spokane Inc., medical and health care leaders, community and civic leaders, partner organizations, and numerous other organizations and individuals, the medical school in Spokane *will* improve health care access and quality of care.

As a twenty year veteran of the Legislature, this effort is unparalleled in recent memory. I am gratified personally and professionally, with how we collectively are able to transform our regional health care industry as well as the local economy. I have supported, and will

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### **Senator Brown Around Town!**

It remains a very busy time as I gear up for the upcoming special legislative session. Even with the many responsibilities that go along with being Senate Majority Leader, including constant travel to the west side, I always greatly benefit from the many local meetings that I take. Rest assured the input and feedback I receive is with me as we begin the daunting task of balancing the budget.

A snapshot of recent meetings and events include:

Presenting to Downtown Rotary 21 on the budget; meeting with the Eastern Washington chapter of the Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure to discuss the funding for Washington's breast,

continue to strongly support, the shared vision for expanding medical education and research in Spokane on the Riverpoint campus.

## Governor calls Special Session starting November 28

One thing is clear: Too many families and communities across Washington are still struggling through the Great Recession. They are buying less, building less and doing less business than hoped for, and because of that, the state expects to take in less revenue. We once again face the prospect of cutting back or eliminating services that support our struggling families to the tune of \$2 billion.

As a result, the governor has called a special session of the Legislature to deal with the challenge, to begin on Nov. 28. However, due to the effects of the global economic recession, state revenues were down this spring by \$5 billion for the coming 2011-2013 budget cycle, which forced the Legislature to pass a budget that will reduce state spending on critical services by \$4.6 billion—more than a quarter of the overall budget. But, our state's budget simply can't escape global economic forces. For a current budget outlook click the "BUDGET UPDATE" graphic below to view a presentation prepared by non-partisan staff.



audits. Before we reach a special session, we will work with the governor as she develops an initial proposal to bridge the budget gap. Despite the enormous challenges last session, we were able to preserve many critical services and programs in the budget and also managed to make significant policy reforms along the way. This spring we passed a budget that spent less than we expected to take in and sent aside more than \$700 million in reserves. But it is important to remember as we go into these next rounds that over half the budget cannot be cut.

My colleagues and I will evaluate the governor's suggested reductions. We've split the work by areas—like education and health care—and are working in bipartisan groups to develop recommendations for potential cuts, long-term reforms, and performance

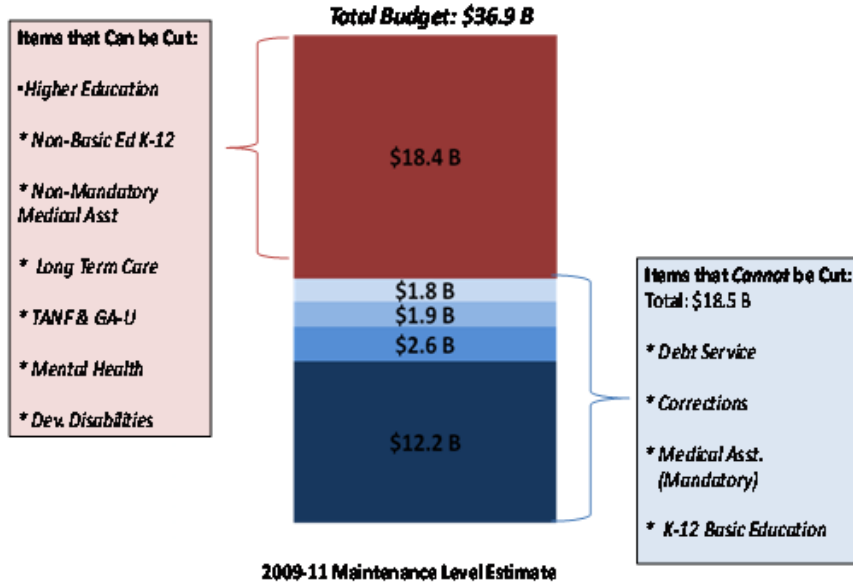
cervical and colon health program; having lunch with Swinging Doors owner Bob Materne to discuss the issues local restaurant owners are facing; and meeting with the Spokane Public Schools Superintendent Nancy Stowell and school board members on the topic of funding for levy equalization. I can't tell you how much I value these important conversations.

I also want to thank those of you who attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District mobile office at Indaba Coffee. It was a great opportunity for my seatmates, Representatives Ormsby and Billig and I, to interact with constituents.

The mobile office is intended to offer citizens assistance with important issues and concerns where they can engage in a question and answer of any topic with their representatives. The mobile office hours were specifically developed as an opportunity for residents who can't visit our office because of time or location restrictions to speak directly with us.



## Over Half of the Budget Cannot be Cut



The special session the governor has called will be another critical time for Washington, one in which many basic programs and services we Washingtonians consider essential will face further cut backs or elimination. If certain investments are critical to our quality of life and our economic future, then not making those investments is the definition of short-sighted. To not make these investments will cost individuals, families, businesses and our economy as a whole far more than the dollar amount of the investments themselves. In other words, our situation isn't one of investments we can't afford. Our situation is one of investments we can't afford to forego.

**As I have said before, I think we do have choices.** Do we want our revenue structure to determine our priorities, or do we want our priorities to determine our revenue structure?

As the special session approaches and legislators grapple with another \$2 billion revenue shortfall in the budget, we need to have a conversation about what kind of state we want to be. If we want a top-quarter quality of life – and if we view the preceding paragraph as a call to do better – we can't hold onto a tax structure in the lower half of the country.

As your senator, I remain committed to protecting our communities, and to ensuring the economic potential of Washington.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, you can contact me via email or through my Spokane office. Even in these very challenging

## The Untimely Passing of Senator Scott White

My colleagues and I in the Senate, as well as people throughout Washington, are grieving the [loss of our friend and State Senator Scott White](#) who represented the 46<sup>th</sup> District in Seattle. Scott didn't work on the easy things. He cared and worked on the important things. He was so devoted to his family. My thoughts and prayers go out to them and all the friends who are already missing him. Scott worked tirelessly to represent the values of his constituents and he took seriously the trust that our Caucus colleagues placed in him. He will truly be missed.

times, it is a privilege and an honor to work for you, and I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Click [here](#) for contact information for my Olympia or Spokane office.

